

## "Seven Hole" Variety of the Western Electric Perfin (W72)

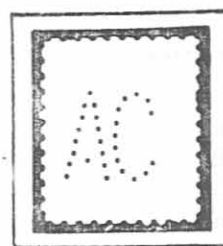
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US Catalog Editor

While working on the manuscript for the forthcoming edition of the US Perfins Catalog, I made a startling discovery while comparing the perfin precancels from Chicago (W72-1) and New York city (W72-1A). Pattern W72-1 has seven holes in each leg of the "W" instead of the normal six. On turning to the list of Branch Offices for the WE (W72) perfin of the Western Electric Company in the current edition of the *Catalog of United States Perfins*, 1979, Balough; I noted that several other patterns on the list also have seven holes in each leg of the "W." Why had this remarkable fact never surfaced before?

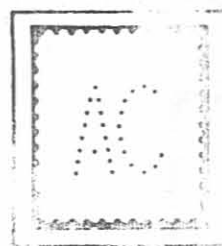
Through use of the Rudy Roy's *Cumulative Index to the Perfins Bulletin* (1993), a reference may be found. An article entitled "The Catalog, anon., 108, May 1960, page 3, "noted the appearance of WE patterns with seven holes in the stem of the "W." Presumably "stem" meant "leg" in this usage. Unfortunately, 1960 was well before my time in the Perfins Club, and this *Bulletin* is not in my literature collection. Nothing more has appeared in the literature and apparently this reference was forgotten before the 1966 and 1979 catalogs were published.

Nevertheless, these patterns do exist and they are illustrated in the 1979 (current) catalog, hidden in the list of Branch Offices. There is no mention of the seven hole variety in the catalog, so apparently the Baloughs were not aware of its existence. Since the pin count is different for these patterns, they should not be included in the list with a notation of W72-1A, etc. This creates a real dilemma for the Catalog Editor.

Theoretically the seven hole leg type of the WE pattern should be a separate list, just as J96.5 was separated from J96. Somehow, this solution seems unsatisfactory, because patterns J96 and J96.5 are really the same except for being made at different times and turning out to have slightly different dimensions. Separating the WE patterns into W72 and W72.5 lists seems wrong, because all of these patterns belong in a single list.



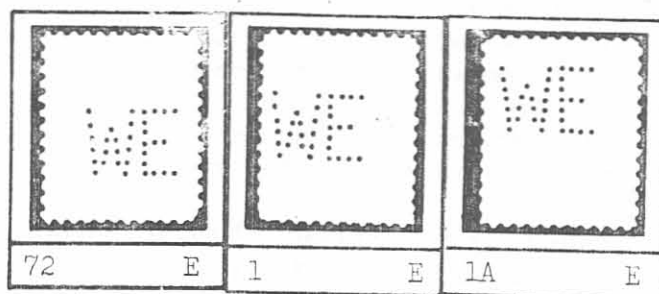
A55



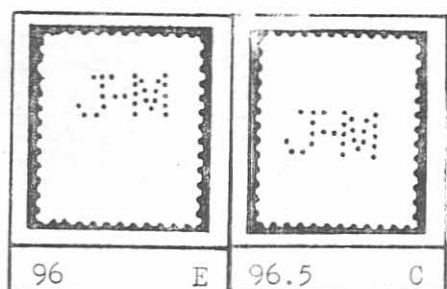
A55.5

What should the poor catalog Editor do? After much turmoil, sneakiness was selected as the solution. Instead of listing the Branch Office patterns as W72-1, W72-2, etc., I decided to list them as W72.1, W72.2, and so forth.

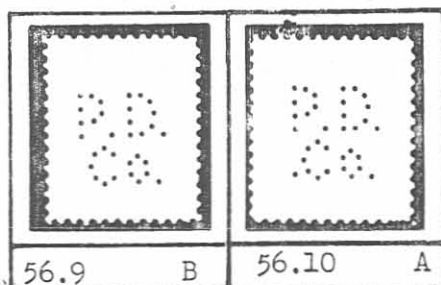
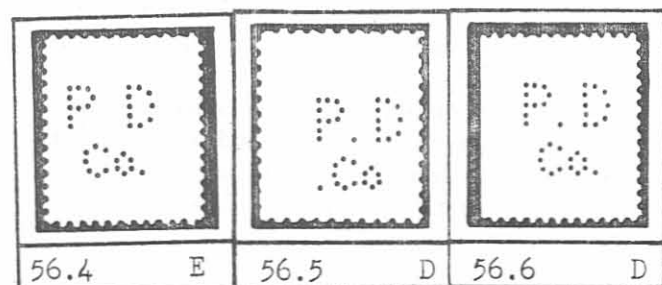
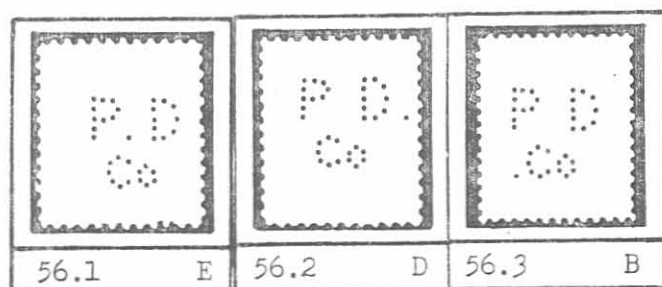
It does not seem like much, but it technically solves the problem. The use of a decimal point is already used throughout the Catalog, as in A55.5 to designate a pattern which has different dimensions, hole counts, etc, from A55. Thus, the list in the current Catalog can remain the same, except for the use of a decimal point instead of a hyphen, plus a notation next to every pattern which has a different hole count from the normal. The enlarged illustration can remain the same, with a note on the page that some of the patterns are slightly different. The sample illustration in the body of the Catalog could be a problem, because it would only illustrate the normal "W" with six-pin legs, but a note there would also suffice.



This solution appears to be so successful, at least to me, that it will be applied to J96, once again combining J96 and J96.5 and listing all the Branch Office Patterns as J96.1, J96.2, and so forth. This also solves the problem of the PD/CO patterns, where P56.9 and P56.10 are radically different from P56.1 through P56.8. Fortunately, through a lack of uniformity in the current Catalog, these pattern numbers will not have to be changed, since they are already listed with decimal points rather than hyphens.



|         |                              |
|---------|------------------------------|
| W72-1A  | 1908 through 1942 War issues |
| W72-50A | 1938-40                      |
| W72-51A | 1926-40                      |
| W72-64A | 1926-40                      |
| W72-66A | 1938-40                      |
| W72-86A | 1926-42                      |



Readers can find out which Western Electric patterns have 21-pin "W's" (7 pins in legs of "W") instead of 19-pin "W's" by studying the Catalog, but to make it easy, they are all listed below, along with their periods of usage (by stamp issue).

Except for pattern W72-1A, all of these patterns fall into the 1926-42 usage period. Note that usage on the rotary press stamps of 1926 does not mean that the patterns were necessarily used in 1926, for these stamps were current until 1938. In fact, it is likely that all these patterns were issued at the same time, probably late 1930's. The difference in the "W" was probably an accident. W72-1A is a different proposition. It may have been deliberately manufactured with 7-pin legs on the "W" to distinguish it from W72-1, sent to Chicago at the same time.

If you have any comments on these patterns or on the Catalog Editor's solution to the problem, please write to me at the address given on the second page of this *Bulletin*. If you have made any other discoveries which would affect the new Catalog, or have suggestions for improving the Catalog, please write.